

March 26



Dear Parents and Carers,

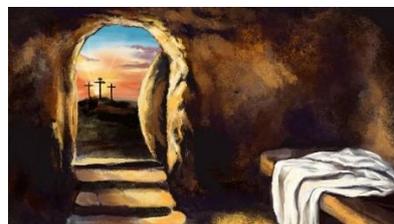
Well, after what has felt like a very long spell of wet weather, we are finally beginning to see some sunshine – hooray! That said, the weather can change very quickly throughout the day, so please ensure your child wears/brings a coat with them so that they can get outside as much as possible and enjoy the fresh air.

The children are beginning to get excited for Easter and I have had the absolute pleasure of seeing some of the wonderful Easter gardens that several of the children have brought into school. I am delighted to say that you will also be given the opportunity to see these during Parents' Evenings as they will be displayed in the hall. My goodness, we have some really creative children and thank you so much to all those families who helped their son/daughter with the garden; they are truly amazing!

As always, lots has been going on this term, despite it being quite short, and I am delighted to share some of this with you within this newsletter. I hope you enjoy seeing just some of the wonderful things that take place at our school – especially when our children usually reply “nothing” when we ask them what they’ve been doing at school that day (or was that just mine?! 😊).

I know that times are tricky for many at the moment, and for those families who need some help please do look at the final couple of pages which outline help and support that is on offer. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need to. Never any judgement – just a helping hand if and when needed.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support to myself, the staff and the children of Holy Cross Catholic Primary School and on behalf of us all, I wish our families a happy and peaceful Easter.



“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

Mrs Dowdeswell

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Wish List



As I know you are aware, schools find it incredibly hard to be able to afford all the things we would like to provide to our pupils and whilst we do the best we can, I have decided to include a 'wish list' section to each newsletter for small items that would make a big difference to us. I will

keep these items small and easy to find so that everyone who wishes to help can do so 😊 My first wish is for **Pritt Stick glue sticks**. These are relatively cheap and can be bought in multi-packs or individually from most supermarkets. This might seem a little odd to ask for, but I am sure you can imagine how many items get stuck into children's books and although we do buy (many!) glue sticks, they are much cheaper and of poorer quality (the pages often fall back out of books!) so we would be so grateful for as many of these better quality glue sticks as we could possibly get – I promise you, they are not too expensive if only buying one or two.



If you are willing and able to buy some of these for our school, please could I ask that you leave them at the office so that they can be distributed across the classes fairly as I know that all teachers will want them for their class – I promise you, all will be extremely grateful! Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Wyvern Dance Festival



Once again, the children who attend our Indian Dance Club performed brilliantly at The Junior Dance Festival at The Wyvern a couple of weeks ago. The children were very nervous before starting, and this photograph shows them getting ready on the stage before they danced brilliantly to a sold-out theatre. They didn't need to be at all nervous as they looked amazing and performed so well. Their behaviour, as always, was a credit to the school and it was a privilege to see them dance. Thank you to parents for providing costumes and for coming to support the children and thank you to the staff who organised and attended the event.



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World Book Day and National Storytelling Week

As a school, we enjoyed celebrating World Book Day and National Storytelling Week. It was delightful to see the children dressed in all different colours and I am so pleased that we were able to provide a book to every child. We all know how important reading is, both for enjoyment and to support overall learning, and it is lovely to be able to celebrate reading with the children in this way.

If you haven't already joined the town library, why don't you do this over the Easter holidays? Go on – you and your child can enjoy all that the library has to offer and it's free. 😊



Science Week



Some of our children were very lucky to attend a workshop by Braintastic Science as part of The Festival of Tomorrow. The children in KS2 found out all about how our senses work through lots of fun and engaging science activities.



Y1 trip to STEAM and parent helpers

The children in Pine and Elm enjoyed their visit to STEAM recently. They learnt lots about transport and Isambard Kingdom Brunel and how important this man was to the development of the railways. I'd like to say a huge thank you to the parents who volunteered to accompany the children on this trip – and, indeed, all trips. Without your help, these trips would not be possible and we are so very grateful to you for giving up your own time to support us in this way. From school trips, listening to children read, accompanying the children when they go to their swimming lessons, weekly trips to church - the list goes on and we are so very thankful to each and every one of you.



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Wind Instrument Music Roadshow

The children enjoyed listening to some very talented musicians when they took part in the music roadshow. They learnt about wind instruments and listened to some excellent music, which they all really enjoyed.

A reminder that pupils of our school have the opportunity to learn to play different musical instruments including drums, guitar and piano. If you are interested, please ask at the office.



Attendance and lateness



Huge well done to the children of **Hazel Class** who won the class attendance award for last term. Their class attendance was **97.3%** which is well above the DfE expectation of 95% - well done to all families of Hazel Class! Hopefully, this newsletter shows you how hard the staff of this school work to provide your children with a high-quality education, but to fully benefit from this, your child needs to be in school and arrive on time. Thank you to all those families who ensure their children are in class ready to start their lessons at 8:45am. It makes such a difference for all children to be ready to start together – again, thank you so much.

Please remember that the DfE changed the guidance on absence and lateness and introduced a new charging structure. Details concerning attendance can be found here:

[https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20032/schools and education/1275/school attendance](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20032/schools_and_education/1275/school_attendance)

Parents' Evenings

Parents' Evenings will be held on Tues 17th and Thurs 19th March for most classes. Time slots have been open on ParentPay for a little while now and we ask that every parent book a meeting to discuss your child's progress. As always, the wonderful prefects will be available to accompany parents to the classrooms and the pupils of the school will be able to play in the Evergreen Room whilst their parents are with the class teacher. I am pleased to advise that parents will also be able to purchase books from a visiting book seller and all sales will help to buy books for the school also.



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Chaplaincy St Carlo Relics trip



On 9th March, our chaplaincy team visited St Gregory's Church in Cheltenham to visit the relics of St Carlo Acutis and to celebrate Mass. The children found the experience insightful and uplifting and brought back a prayer card for every pupil at the school. Please may I take this opportunity to say thank you to Mrs Serratore and Mrs Braganza who run the chaplaincy team at Holy Cross – they do an excellent job and the children gain so much from the many opportunities they provide.

*"I can do all things through him who strengthens me." –
Philippians 4:13*

Catholic Social Teaching

Our Catholic Social Teaching principles for this term are Distributive Justice and Promoting Peace and these feel so very important in view of what we see going on in the world at the moment. Please see below one of the prayers we share with the children and I invite you to read this with them at home.

Loving God,
We believe you want to bring your
peace to our homes, our
communities and our world.
Help us to be peacemakers,
listening to and loving each other.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our prayer



Being peacemakers
Promoting Peace

I know that some of you will have family in parts of the world where there is war and unrest; please know that we hold you in my thoughts and prayers.

Great Walk for Lent

As part of our charity initiative for Lent, the children will be taking part in a walk to raise money for CAFOD. All children will be walking, either within the school grounds or to Queen's Park, and details have been sent separately regarding how to make donations. Once again, thank you to those parents who have offered to accompany the children so that this event can take place. Thank you to Miss Vickers for organising this event.



Hockey Team



Well done to the school hockey team for their great results in a recent inter-school tournament. All played well and we had some well-deserved winning scores. We are very lucky to be able to give our pupils the experience of playing in matches against other Swindon schools in a variety of sports, including football, netball and hockey 😊

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Parents Questionnaire

Thank you to all those parents from EYFS and Year 1 who took the time to complete the recent questionnaire that was sent regarding information provided to you when your child first started school. The feedback was very positive and shows that, on the whole, the experience was helpful and provided all you needed to know. As a result of some of the comments and suggestions made, we are going to amend how we provide some of the information at this year's new starters' evening. Thank you once again – your support is much appreciated and I am confident that this year's families will benefit from the changes we plan to make 😊

Keeping our children safe

Thank you to all those parents who responded to my offer of providing a separate safeguarding newsletter. The results overwhelmingly showed that parents would welcome a separate newsletter and therefore I shall begin producing these for our families.

Goodbye



It is always a sad time when we say goodbye to a friend and colleague, but equally happy when we know that they will be starting a role in an area which they hold close to their hearts. Ms Silva will be leaving us to work in a specialist provision for children with SEND and I know you will join me in wishing her all the very best for her new role. Ms Silva has worked at the school for many years as a class teacher and for the last few years has been supporting our children with SEND as a SENDCo Assistant. Ms Silva will be greatly missed by all of us and we wish her every success in her new setting.

School Calendar Dates 2026-27

Please note that the school calendar for 2026-27 has now been added to our school website. The half term holidays align with those organised by Swindon Borough Council. [2026-2027 Calendar](#).

School places for Reception classes

We still have spaces available for children starting school in September 2026. If you know of anyone who has a child due to start school at this time, please contact the office if they would like to visit our school and consider the wonderful education we offer for their son/daughter.



Children in Reception making gingerbread men – they had a wonderful time making – and eating – their biscuits 😊

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Diary Dates



Tuesday 17 th March	Parents Evening and Book Fair
Thursday 19 th March	Parents Evening and Book Fair
Thursday 26 th March	Easter Egg hunt
Friday 27 th March	TD Day – school is closed to all pupils.
Monday 30 th March- 10 th April	Half Term holidays
Monday 13 th April	School returns
Wednesday 15 th April	Whole school class photographs
Thursday 23 rd April	Year 3 Class assembly
Friday 8 th May	Year 5- Alder Class assembly
Monday 11 th May	KS2 SATs week
Thursday 14 th May	Year 5- Aspen Class assembly
Tuesday 19 th May	Year 3 trip to Avebury
Tuesday 19 th May	Jungle Jonathan with EYFS
Thursday 21 st May	EYFS assembly
Thursday 21 st May	Quad Kids Y5 and Y6
Friday 22 nd May	Culture Day
Mon 25 th May – 29 th May	Half Term holiday
Mon 1 st June	School returns
Thurs 4 th June	Junior Good Citizen trip – Y6
Thurs 4 th June	Year 4 Hazel Class assembly
Thurs 4 th June	Year 4 Larch Class assembly
Thurs 5 th June	Pentecost Mass
Mon 8 th – 10 th June	PGL Residential trip – Y6
Week beg 8 th June	Multiplication Tests – Y4
Mon 15 th June	TD Day – school is closed to all pupils
Thurs 18 th June	Y6 Mass at Clifton Cathedral
Fri 19 th June	Y4 trip to Oxenwood
Thurs 25 th June	Y5 trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park
Tues 30 th June	New Starters' Information Evening

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Cultural Capital

Definition of cultural capital:

- The values, knowledge or ideas that parents can pass on to their children, which can then influence their success at school and later in life.

In school, we work hard to give the children as many first-hand experiences as we can; however, we would love for the children to experience more. The term 'cultural capital' refers to the real-life experiences children have with their families, and these experiences have been proved time and again to have a huge impact on a child's learning. Here are some ideas of places to visit in and around Swindon which you might enjoy with your child(ren):



MUSEUM & ART
SWINDON

A little while ago, some of the teachers visited the new Museum & Art Swindon and were very impressed with the events on offer for children. Here is a link to show you all that they have on offer over the holidays – some events come with a cost but others are free 😊 [Easter Fun at Museum & Art](#)

[Swindon](#)

Town Gardens, Quarry Rd, Old Town, Swindon [About - Town Gardens Swindon](#)



Town Gardens is a wonderful park and has lots to do to keep you and your children busy. There is a bandstand where bands often play on Sundays; a café; an excellent play area suitable for all ages; tennis courts; a pond; and an aviary. Entry is free unless you wish to see one of the many shows on at the Town Gardens Bowl. The park is particularly beautiful at this time of the year as it is well-known for the spring blossom which will be out in a few weeks' time.



I hope you manage to visit one or more of these places as a family 😊

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Welcome to our Food Pantries!

Our pantries enable you and your household to access to nutritious food for a fraction of what these items would cost at a supermarket. You can pick up fresh fruit, vegetables, salad, bread, cake, chilled and a frozen item (depending on availability) for **FREE**. All you need to do is pay the six-month membership fee and then exchange cash for points if you would like to, for all the other store cupboard items (**these are approx. 2/3 cheaper or more than the supermarket!**).

How it will work

Membership

Each household will pay £1 per person, per household for a six-month registration period. (e.g., 4 members in a household will cost £4 for 6 months) and complete a very short registration form. Proof of income or benefit will be required. Max £22,000 income per household, but chat to us if you are struggling and don't fit these criteria or have no access to any funds (Organisations across Swindon can also refer).

Weekly point system

Once you become a member, this allows you to exchange cash for points when you visit (£1 equals 4 points) in addition to the free items. Members enter the shopping area and choose items to the value of the points purchased. The items are then taken to the till and any unused points will be carried over to the next visit. By offering a points credit system, it allows member to purchase points in bulk when paid (maximum £20) and then return to shop throughout the month when required.

The funds raised will allow us to reinvest in a consistent supply of foods we normally struggle to provide such as coffee, sugar, toiletries, cheese etc. All items will be subject to availability.

Registration forms are available on the day.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

email: admin@swindonnightshelter.org.uk

Tel: 01793 613166

Registered Charity: 1187554

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SWINDON Night Shelter

FOOD PANTRIES

AMBIENT, FRESH, CHILLED AND FROZEN FOOD
AT A FRACTION OF THE COST

TUESDAYS 2.15PM TO 4.00PM @
THE HAVEN
QUEENS DRIVE
SWINDON
SN3 1AR

WEDNESDAYS 2.00PM TO 4.30PM @
PARK NORTH VILLAGE HALL,
LYNDHURST CRESCENT,
PARK NORTH,
SWINDON
SN3 2RW

FRIDAYS 1.30PM TO 4.00PM @
CHIPPENHAM CLOSE COMMUNITY CENTRE,
CHIPPENHAM CLOSE,
PENHILL,
SN2 5DB

 www.swindonnightshelter.org.uk

 www.facebook.com/swindonnightshelter

[@swindonnightshelter](https://www.instagram.com/swindonnightshelter)

Reg. Char. No. 1187554
The Haven, Queens Drive, SN3 1AR
01793 613166



Help with food

Free food is available from these outlets:

Big Breakfast+ at the Pilgrim Centre Swindon. Free breakfast between 07.30 and 9.00am for anyone who is hungry. No referral necessary.

FoodCycle Swindon at the Pinetrees Community Centre, SN2 1QR. Free hot meals every Thursday, 6.30pm. No referral necessary.

Gorse Hill Community Fridge - open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am to 2pm. The aim of the fridge is to reduce food waste and to prevent good food from being thrown into landfill. It is also helps reduce food poverty in local communities. Food is donated by local supermarkets and is free to everyone!

<https://www.swindonfoodcollective.org/useful-information/#:~:text=FoodCycle%20Swindon%20at%20the%20Pinetrees,Thursdays%20from%2011am%20to%202pm.>

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